

NEWSRAIL

SEPTEMBER 1998

Print Post Approved PP349018/00059 \$5.50





Volume 26

Number 9

SEPTEMBER 1998

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NEWSRAIL thanks the following people
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**SUBSCRIPTIONS FOR
NON-MEMBERS**

Mailed flat, with supplements not
provided with across-the-counter copies.

May - April - \$62.50

November - April - \$32

All subscriptions expire with the April
issue. Write to ARHS Membership Officer,
Box 5177AA, GPO Melbourne 3001, for
subscriptions and details of membership,
monthly meetings and activities.

NEWSRAIL is published by the Australian
Railway Historical Society Victorian
Division Inc. and details Victorian railway
happenings and related items. Opinions
expressed in NEWSRAIL are not necessarily
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ISSN 0 310-7477.

Closing date for News, Articles and
Photographs: twenty-fourth of each
month.

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FOR ALL WHO ARE INTERESTED IN RAILWAYS

NEWSRAIL

ESTABLISHED 1973

THE MAGAZINE OF THE AUSTRALIAN RAILWAY HISTORICAL SOCIETY
(VICTORIAN DIVISION)

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FRONT AND BACK COVER: CLF1-ALF21 on the down Tolls superfreighter are
overtaken by B76 on the 18 00 down West Coast service at Koroit Creek Road,
Paisley on Tues.20.1.98 *Graham Withers*

OPPOSITE: Ex South Australian Railway's Redhen 402 rests at Nyora in
between shuttles on the South Gippsland Railway on Sun.29.9.96 *Stephen Cleverdon*

GENERAL NEWS

A monthly round-up of Victorian railway news and events

C A L E N D A R

SEPTEMBER

ANNIVERSARIES

- 3rd, 1878: Opening of Dunolly - Bealiba line. (120)
 3rd, 1883: Opening of Benalla - St James line. (115)
 7th, 1958: Coburg line closed after 18 00 on Sundays. (40)
 7th, 1958: Centralised Traffic Control introduced on East Malvern to Glen Waverley line. (40)
 7th, 1968: Last Morwell - Mirboo North railmotor service operated (a 102 hp Walker). (30)
 8th, 1983: Superfreighters introduced between Melbourne and Sydney. (15)
 12th, 1993: Last *Vinlander* ran from Mildura. (5)
 14th, 1928: Macleod - Mont Park goods line electrified. (70)
 14th, 1958: One class suburban travel introduced. (40)
 14th, 1988: Closure of line Nowingi - Brunswick Plaster Siding. (10)
 19th, 1993: West Coast Railway operated its first revenue passenger train between Warrnambool and Melbourne hauled by N466 *City of Warrnambool*. (5)
 30th, 1953: Closure of Korumburra - Jumbunna line. (45)
 1858: First rail hearse in service. These were in use until 1953. (140)
 1963: First of 75 Y class d.e. locos entered service. (35)
 1993: PTC restructured into five separate businesses - V/Line Freight, V/Line Passenger, MET Trains, MET Trams and MET Buses. (5)

OCTOBER

ANNIVERSARIES

- 1st, 1883: Opening of Charlton - Wychebrook line. (115)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Dandenong - Tooradin line. (110)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Ballarat Racecourse - Waubra line. (110)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Frankston - Baxter line. (110)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Bendigo North Junction - Heathcote line. (110)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Kilmore - Heathcote Junction line. (110)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Shepparton - Dookie line. (110)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Numurkah - Cobram line. (110)
 1st, 1888: Opening of Numurkah - Nathalia line. (110)
 1st, 1958: Closure of Warragul - Noojee line. (40)
 5th-8th, 1968: Spencer Street Station Exhibition of Rollingstock and Track Equipment - 75,000 visitors. (30)
 6th, 1918: First electric train in Australia ran from Newmarket power station to Flemington Racecourse - 2 km. (80)

ARHS MEMBERS' LIBRARY

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ARHS ARCHIVES

Down platform, Windsor Station
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LINE CONVERSION

Ararat stands to benefit from a rejuvenated rail freight industry likely to occur as a result of Federal Government funding to the order of \$87 million in the 1999-2000 budget. \$75 million will be allocated for the conversion of broad gauge lines in the north west of the State to standard gauge. The south-west municipalities infrastructure working party is optimistic that standardisation will see greater use of both Portland and Geelong for exports, particularly by New South Wales and South Australian exporters. Mineral sands mined at Ouyen could pass through Ararat on its way to Portland when the work is completed.

Currently 1.8 million tonnes of produce is transported to Portland by road each year, with one third of that being grain. The working party said that increased use of rail freight would produce enormous savings regarding wear and tear on the road network. (*Ararat Advertiser*)

V/LINE FREIGHT BIDDERS

Vicgrain is no longer in the running to acquire V/Line Freight according to the rural press (*Weekly Times* 22.7.98). The battle to own the freight operation seems to be an all American affair, with RailAmerica and Wisconsin Central (owners of TasRail) the main contenders. Opinion in rural areas is that 'this would not be a bad thing'. (*EP*)

RE-CLASSIFIED LOCO FLEET

TasRail have been renumbering their fleet of locos and removing the class letters in the process.

ZP1, ZP2	2100, 2101
Zs and ZAs	2110 - 2119
ZBs	2120 - 2130
Y1, Y5	2150, 2151
ZCs (not all)	2140 - 2146

If Wisconsin Central wins V/Line Freight, will this happen here too? (*PS*)

CHANGES AT DYNON

As of Mon.20.7, the TNT rail siding at the north end of South Dynon NR yard is no longer in use. TNT container traffic is now handled at North Dynon.

The new safety board at the Lloyd Street entrance of North Dynon yard shows the newly erected shed as the 'Paper Business' shed. (*EP*)

WEBB DOCK LINE

The Webb Dock line is being lifted along Brimer Street and is no longer available for traffic. (*EP*)

MELBOURNE - DARWIN (VIA BENDIGO)

The Victorian Employers' Chamber of Commerce and Industry north central regional manager Mr David Addison said, 'if central Victoria cannot get easy access to the railway, it will give other agricultural regions an export advantage.'

To maintain a competitive advantage in niche industries of agricultural products, the area must have access to this railway. (*PJ*)

NR BUSINESS CHANGES

A new business division will be created called BulkFlow which will have the responsibility of non-steel freight and also the GSR contract. The division will be joined by Intermodal, Steel-Link, SeaTrain and Trailerail.

National Rail will also be bidding for the coal haulage task between Leigh Creek and Port Augusta, provided that the South Australian Government provides the legal basis for NR to operate intrastate freight. (*PJ*)

MOORABBIN OFFICIALLY LAUNCHED AS A PREMIUM STATION

Moorabbin was officially launched as a Premium station on Wed.1.6 after a \$310,000 upgrade. It is the first of ten stations to be upgraded in a second phase of the Premium station program (the first phase of the program upgraded a total of 51 stations to this standard).

Moorabbin now has improved customer facilities, including audio communication links that provide customer information and emergency assistance, public address systems announcing details of the next train, closed circuit television cameras monitoring the platforms and upgraded lighting.

A new brochure listing all Premium stations and their facilities was also released in conjunction with the launch at Moorabbin. The next Premium station to be launched was Epping on Thurs.23.7. (*CB*)



APM PAPER TRAINS ON BOTH SIDES OF BASS STRAIT

- Above: 2128 leads two other class members as they depart Railton in the north of Tasmania bound for Burnie with an empty paper train from the APM mill at Boyer on Sat.11.7.98. 2128 is a former ZB class member
• *Julian Insall*
- Below: X45-X46 near the mill on the APM branch line at Maryvale. Sat.8.2.97 *Darren Hodges*



GENERAL NEWS

PORT MELBOURNE STATION

Further to NEWSRAIL page 220, July 1998. The medical practice in the fully restored former station building at Port Melbourne was opened on Mon.15.6. (CB)

UNUSUAL LIGHTING AT SPENCER STREET

In mid-June, V/Line Passenger installed blue coloured lighting in the basement toilets at Spencer Street station designed to discourage intravenous drug taking and other anti-social activity in these areas. (CB)

SUB-LET OF BALLAN STATION

The sub-let of Ballan station noted on page 221 of the July 1998 issue commenced on Mon.20.7. (CB)

END OF THE RAILWAY PHOTOGRAPHER

Since about 1910, the railways in Victoria have employed their own photographers to capture the constant changes to the system for publicity and other business reasons.

This came to an end on Wed.1.7 when the PTC photographic section and its extensive photographic archives dating from the earliest days of railway operations in Victoria was transferred across to the Department of Infrastructure (DoI).

The Photographic Section will remain on Level 10 at Transport House (589 Collins Street) until sufficient space becomes available at the DoI Headquarters in Nauru House (80 Collins Street). (CB)

CHANGE IN MANAGEMENT OF STONY POINT SERVICE

On Wed.1.7, the management of the Frankston - Stony Point passenger service passed from V/Line Passenger to Bayside Trains with the division of the PTC amongst the five new Corporations established on this date.

V/Line Passenger had managed the services since 1 July 1995 and had generated strong patronage growth over time based on a program of improving the physical condition of the service and adjusting the timetable to suit market requirements. Some of the initiatives implemented over the last three years included:

- Introducing a revised timetable from 12 November 1995 that was

adjusted to suit the demands of major markets along the line, including the Naval Depot at *HMAS Cerberus*.

- Repainting all station buildings and installing new signage by November 1995 to improve the appearance of the line.
- Repainting all rollingstock (A and N class locos and MTH carriages) used regularly on the line after November 1995 in the V/Line Passenger colours of red and blue.
- Ballast undercutting the track to remove mud spots and improve the riding performance (this work was completed by December 1995).
- Providing a pedestrian crossing at Tyabb in January 1996 to improve access from the station to the large market at this location.
- Extending the platform at Stopping Place No.15 by 25 metres (completed on 29 November 1996) and erecting a new shelter at this location in December 1996 (Stopping Place No.15 was renamed Morradoo in January 1997).
- Replacing the rails between Bittern (Urquhart Crescent) and Stony Point by December 1996 to eliminate speed restrictions (the replacement rails came primarily from the Stratford Junction to Maffra line when it was lifted).
- Introducing an additional Sunday return service from 7 September 1997.
- A new passenger shelter similar to the one erected at Morradoo in 1996 was erected at Baxter on 10 December 1997. (CB)

HOLIDAY AND TOURS PROMOTION

On Tues.21.7, staff from V/Line Passenger Holiday and Tours were handing out information in the Spencer Street subway promoting their products. Penguin Vic, the Holiday and Tours mascot, was also present to attract the attention of commuters passing through the subway. (CB)

OVER THE BORDER

South Australian Transport Minister Diana Laidlaw stated that Transfield is to standardise the Tailem Bend to Pinnaroo line on behalf of ASR. Work is scheduled to start in August and be completed by November. Funding is to be provided by the Federal and SA Governments. AN had previously

proposed to dismantle the Wolseley to Mount Gambier line to provide materials for this project but now ASR has an option over the line until October 1999. If ASR does not exercise this option the line will revert to the State. (IS)

STATION BUILDINGS TO GO

It is believed that tenders are to be called for the removal of intermediate station buildings along the Gheringhap to Maroona line. Cressy, Derrinalum and Westmere buildings are likely to remain, but the others, which include Pura Pura and Tatyoon will go. (IS)

LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

It is encouraging to see an increase in the number of contributors for this issue. It doesn't take much for a bit of variety to make our magazine more interesting to read. We are happy to assist you if you have some news or material that would be suitable as an article. With computers gradually infiltrating our ranks it is now much easier to turn raw materials into printable product.

We have some new things coming up soon, including a reader survey and a new competition. We'll talk more on those next month.

In the December issue we will be celebrating the completion of 25 years of NEWSRAIL. If you have something that would be suitable for that issue please send it in for the benefit of all readers.

Talk to you again soon.

Barry Lloyd

NOTHING TO DO ON

TUESDAY NIGHTS?

Why not visit the
ARHS Archives on the down
platform at Windsor
from 8 pm?

See you there!



S302-S311 at South Geelong on an up Warrnambool service in September 1995 Jason Oliver

— The West Coast Railway — DIESEL FLEET

They were little more than rusty hulks that needed a lot of work to bring them up to a roadworthy standard, let alone into a condition that was sufficiently acceptable for the members of the Public Transport Union Locomotive Division (PTULD) to step aboard.

Fortunately for their own peace of minds, few of the West Coast people who were there on the day realised how much would be involved in getting the locomotives up to scratch. Over the next few weeks, six B class locomotives joined the S class locos at Ballarat (B61, 64, 65, 75, 76 and 80) and they were in a similar condition.

The campaign to get the locomotives back up to mainline standard lasted for the next year, and changed the locomotives considerably. Probably the most noticeable alteration, for the crews at least, was the provision of a sound wall between the No. 1 end electrical cabinet and the air compressor. Perhaps not noticeable from the outside, the sound wall resulted in a dramatic reduction in noise level in the cabs, and was much commented on by the crews at the time. A multitude of modifications were made to bring the locomotives up to modern day standards, including airconditioning in the

On 5 February 1994, the first locomotives of the newly acquired West Coast Railway fleet arrived at Ballarat East. The four S class locomotives, S300, S302, S311 and S312, were in running order, but that would be about the kindest thing that could be said about them

Robert Butrimis

cabs, marker lights that could be changed from white to red from the driver's cab, dual windscreen wipers with window washers and a host of other changes. Some 64 in all, which cost a fortune on their own without dealing with the upgrading of the mechanical side of the locomotives.

In all, three S class locomotives (300, 302 and 311) were returned to service, and B61 was rebuilt as a back up unit. Some time later B76 was rebuilt to join the other operating locomotives. This was largely the result of the fact that B61 was found to be able to handle the trains on time without any difficulty.

Of the remaining locomotives that

were purchased by West Coast Railway, S312 was supposed to be one of the mainline fleet, but its general condition was so bad that it kept being put on the back burner, although it is intended to rebuild it one day. B80, which was extensively rebuilt by the PTC as a result of a fire, using electro-magnetic contactors similar to those fitted to C class locomotives, would be the next locomotive to be rebuilt should another mainline engine be required, and this is expected to happen in the foreseeable future. B65 and B 76 were in very close to original condition.

One of these was earmarked for potential rebuilding as a heritage locomotive in the blue and gold scheme. Unfortunately the original brass number plates were stolen from B75 just before it left South Dynon, so the decision was made to keep B65 as the future heritage machine, and B75 was relegated to a spare parts supply, together with B64.

The introduction of the S and B class locomotives was not without its problems. The locomotives took a while to be run in, and the relationships between the PTC staff and West Coast Railway staff were often strained. None of this was conducive to good train running, but gradually the problems were overcome.

Many new problems revealed themselves with the locomotives in the early days, and they frequently limped back to Ballarat for more repairs and rebuilding. Bogie changes at that time became almost constant, but each time they rolled out of Ballarat they were that little bit better and more reliable. The West Coast diesel maintainers spent many long days and nights getting the locomotives back into service because another one was on the doorstep.

As time passed the visits of the locomotives to Ballarat, outside of normal servicing requirements, became less and less, and their reliability and performance became less in question. In addition, West Coast Railway was now much more accepted by the majority of railway men, and these two factors resulted in regular on time running performances.

The West Coast Railway operation was focussed into a more efficient method of working, which also helped improve performance. Train consists got smaller, even though passenger numbers were increasing, helping the performance even more. Spare locomotives were based at Warrnambool so the critical midday turnaround of the down and up trains was not delayed by having to turn a locomotive. A high level of reliability was finally starting to be achieved.

Even so, trains were delayed, with the words 'contractor's locomotives unable to maintain schedules' often appearing

among the reasons for late running. The engines for a long time had a reputation for being too old and under-powered for the fastest country passenger train in Victoria. No one could explain however, why the locomotives could arrive on time one day and be late the next day with exactly the same load.

This resulted in an extensive research program which is still carried on to this day. Each train performance was analysed and every delay recorded. Sectional running times that were beyond scheduled were investigated. The performance of each train that was not on time at every station was put under a microscope to establish why it was late, even if the train was on time at the destination. This information was then analysed and taken up with who ever caused the delay, regardless of whether they originated from West Coast Railway or the PTC. At the end of the month, this information was collated into a file, complete with performance graphs of all concerned and sent to the key people within West Coast Railway, the PTC and the Transport Ministry. As a result, causes of train delays were highlighted and in many cases eliminated, resulting in a further improvement in the services.

Even so all of this did not vindicate the reputation of the West Coast Railway locomotives in many peoples' eyes, and in the end it was decided to do a trial. On two successive days the train was run firstly by S302 and then by N452. On both days, the consists and the drivers were exactly the same. The result of a comparison between the two days was that the S class was marginally faster in the sectional running times in each direction than the N class. This raised many eyebrows although this result had been predicted by some of the Geelong crews who regularly run the Warrnambool trains.

This trial proved that there was not much difference between the S and N class locomotives on passenger trains (the results on a freight train would be much more slanted in favour of the N class as the full benefits of the turbo would be maximised).

S300 stands at the fuel point at Ballarat East Loco in September 1995 with a headboard fitted to promote Geelong in the AFL finals' competition *Julian Insall*



The performance of the S class locos was further enhanced by adopting the suggestion of a Geelong driver, the late Keith Williams. Keith suggested that since the locos were nearly always on passenger trains, they should start off in second stage series parallel and field shunt twice instead of starting off in first stage series parallel before going to second stage series parallel and field shunt twice. This was experimented with, and it was found that the locomotives would take off a great deal faster from stations, just as Keith had said they would. This change was adopted on all S locos with provision to return the locomotives to normal operation when required.

The four years of operation of B and S class locomotives on the West Coast Railway service has not been without some spectacular failures and some interesting repairs. S302 was notable for a couple of major failures. In its first failure it threw a connecting rod putting a piston through the side of the engine and crushing the oil galleries on both sides. As a result, a replacement engine was obtained from scrapped ANR locomotive, GM20. This new engine retained its ANR exhaust system and now sounds very different from the other S class locomotives.

S302 further disgraced itself when the main generator became defective. A replacement main generator was taken out of B75 and fitted to the S class. S300 suffered a similar failure on 4 July 1997. While running as the leading engine of a Warrnambool bound double-headed train, S300 shut down near Geelong Racecourse. The driver rang the West Coast Railway Maintenance Manager and advised that the engine room was full of oil. West Coast Railway maintenance staff were at Colac preparing J536 for movement to Ballarat and they inspected the locomotive on arrival there. Like S302, S300 had a piston laying in the catwalk.

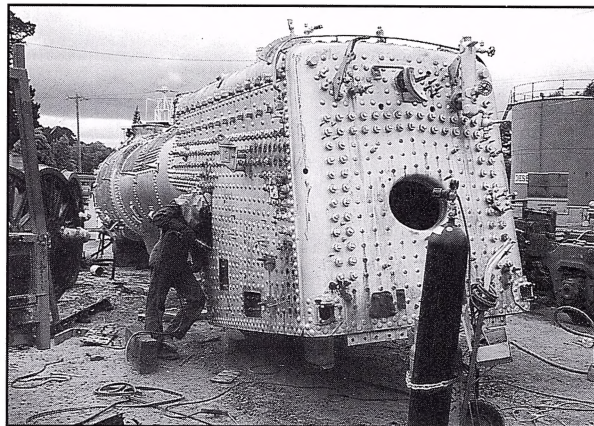
This time however a new engine was not the order of the day. The West Coast diesel maintainers inspected the locomotive at Ballarat and decided they could fix it. The side was cut out of the engine and the boilermaker crawled in and started to repair the crushed oil galleries. This difficult process was eventually achieved and with the crankshaft still in good order and the defective power assembly replaced, S300 re-entered service six days later.

Since the engines entered service in 1995 they have run about 1,622,007 kilometres in West Coast Railway service. S300 is the highest mileage locomotive with 437,799 kilo-

metres in West Coast service, while B76 is the lowest mileage mainliner with just under 156,223 kilometres in West Coast service.

These days, with train performance running at a consistent 95% on time, there are rarely arguments about the ability of the locomotives to keep time.

How long the S and B class locos remain in service on West Coast trains remains to be seen. They shall certainly see the turn of the century. The locomotives that replace them will certainly have some good performances to live up to.



R711's boiler receiving attention at the Ballarat East Workshops during May 1998

T369 shunts R711's tender over the turntable at Ballarat East during June 1998

Both photos West Coast Railway



S300-X37 prepare to depart Spencer Street with the 18 00 down pass. to Warrnambool while a B class from the afternoon's arrival awaits a crew. Fri.14.8.98 Ian Green



PRIVATISATION OF VICTORIAN RAIL

— Careful planning essential —

On Wednesday 1 July 1998, the Minister for Transport, Robin Cooper, announced that the remaining business units of the Public Transport Corporation, V/Line Passenger, Bay-side and Hillside Trains, Yarra and Swanston Trams, had been split off from the parent, corporatised and now operate as separate entities with their own boards, assets and personnel. Twelve months previously, V/Line Freight had been set up as a separate corporation. On that same day, 1 July 1997, under the 1996 Rail Corporation Act, an independent Victorian Rail Track Corporation was formed, trading as Vic Track Access (VRT).

VRT was empowered to establish, manage and maintain railways and rail infrastructure in non-electrified operational areas in Victoria, in accordance with the relevant Border Railways Act. It took over train control from V/Line Freight and was made responsible for controlling access onto and movement of rollingstock on the railways.

IN RETROSPECT

As early as September 1990, rumours were rife that the State Labor Government was secretly negotiating the hand over of Victoria's debt-ridden country rail operation, V/Line, to the Federal Government's Australian National Railways. This never eventuated, but in the following years Victorian Public Transport was being described as the worst run government business enterprise in Australia, due to widespread inefficiencies, roting and growing debt. The system was oper-

*Public transport in Victoria
has reached a watershed
with valuable lessons
hopefully already learned*

Sid Brown

ating with a yearly gap between spending and revenue of \$1.3 to \$2 billion.

The Coalition's 1992 pre-election policy outlined the most radical reform of the State's public transport system this century. After taking over Government on 6 January 1993, the new Minister for Transport embarked on this

reform. Much of what was proposed had been recommended and even attempted by previous Liberal and Labor Governments, but they had retreated in the face of overwhelming political and industrial pressures. The new Government under the remorseless force of economic necessity and committed to sweeping financial, administrative and industrial reforms believed that they had to proceed.

TRANSPORT REVOLUTION

Included among the many points in the Government's debt-busting blueprint, rail freight was to be run as a self-contained business, Met buses were to be contracted out and nine country rail services were to be replaced by privately run trains or coaches.

Within days, tenders were invited from interested parties wishing to operate passenger services along any or all of the nine country train routes. Four months later came the announcement that V/Line would continue to run trains to Swan Hill, Stony Point, Sale and Albury, with coaches running from Sale to Bairnsdale, and replacing one train to Albury (this later being replaced by a train). The train services from Melbourne to Leongatha, Mildura, and Ballarat to Dimboola were to be replaced by privately owned coaches

One of the private interstate operators to make an impact in Victoria has been the services operated by Patrick Stevedores. Here on Mon.21.7.97 CLF1-GM42 depart Wingeel with a full load of containers bound for Appleton Dock





G531 arrives at Meredith on a fine spring day during October 1997 on a down empty grain train bound for Maryborough. When privatised next year, grain traffic will be one of V/Line Freight's core business commodities *Both photos Julian Insall*

on a seven year contract. The successful tenderers for the Melbourne to Warrnambool and Cobram lines were West Coast Railway of Geelong and Hoys Coachlines of Wangaratta, both primarily to operate on rail.

Somewhat surprisingly while tenders were called for services between Geelong and Warrnambool and Seymour and Cobram, both contracts nominated services from Melbourne. Hoys opted for coach travel between Shepparton and Cobram to link with their trains leased from, operated and maintained by the PTC. On-train staff were to be Hoys. West Coast Railway took the bigger risk by deciding to purchase, maintain and service their own locomotives and rollingstock and to operate their own trains, but using V/Line drivers.

Conscious of the fact that the State could no longer afford the enormous losses, outmoded operation methods, chronic overmanning, a sheltered workshop mentality and union-shielded rosters, restructuring of the PTC has continued since 1993 with various Corporation functions devolved to business unit level and out-sourcing of on-core activities.

THE PRESENT

Following a number of postponements, privatisation of six corporatised PTC business units appears imminent. At the time of writing, expressions of interest are likely to be called for V/Line Freight by August 1998, for V/Line Passenger and one Tram and one suburban Train corporation by September 1998, with the second Tram and Train corporations a few months later. On this suggested timetable, after evaluation, successful tenderers should be known by the end of the first quarter of 1999.

Victoria is the obvious pacesetter in public transport privatisation in this country with Met Buses already sold to National Bus (November 1993) and Metropolitan Bus Link (April 1998). It is hoped that the experience gained particularly from the privatisation of the Warrnambool and Shepparton rail services is applied in the preparation of detailed contracts and firm unambiguous service agreements for the

six pending, primarily rail, services, obviating later changes to agreed business plans. Adequate time will hopefully be allowed for assessment of all details including the current conditions of the systems.

Consistent monitoring by Government and private operators of the cost and customer-focused service delivery effectiveness must surely be another priority.

The Government will continue to set passenger fare and service schedules, and set the standards for infrastructure. As now it will provide a subsidy to all public transport operators to meet their Community Service Obligations (CSO) by bringing Government Promoted Protected (concession) ticket fares up to full fare value. Some commentators appear to selectively ignore the general application of this principle.

V/LINE FREIGHT CORPORATION (VLFC)

When the Government invites offers from the private sector to acquire VLFC it will include a long term lease from Victorian Rail Track Corporation (VRT) of the non-metropolitan intrastate infrastructure (track, signalling, train control and the safe working thereof). The lease will permit VLFC to maintain the track in accordance with its own maintenance strategy and business opportunities, but subject to statutory access rights on commercial terms of all other safety accredited users. The Government will ensure, possibly by legislation that track standards are maintained at a level suitable for passenger train operation on lines where they operate.

Certain maintenance facilities, terminals, yards, shunting facilities and sidings will be included in the sale.

The VRT government-owned corporation will continue to own the real estate and the tracks, but the infrastructure leasing arrangement with VLFC does suggest a reversion to the situation that existed prior to 1 July 1997.

With the long awaited Australian Rail Track Corporation (ARTC) also becoming established on 1 July 1998, it will lease



West Coast Railway have proved that privatisation can be successful. B76 on the morning down pass. to Warrnambool passes the morning up pass. near Lara on Sat.22.8.98 *Jason Oliver*

the Victorian interstate standard gauge track from VRT and take over the responsibility from its Victorian counterpart.

VLFC will have an initial lease of the intrastate infrastructure for 15 years with options to extend the lease for two further 15 year periods.

V/LINE PASSENGER CORPORATION (VLPC)

When VLPC is privately franchised for a likely 15 year period, there will be an associated lease from VRT of the non-metropolitan stations, Spencer Street station (non metro) and the Dudley Street carriage maintenance facility. All passenger locomotives and rollingstock will be part of the sale.

WEST COAST RAILWAY (WCR)

Approaching five years of operation of the rail service between Melbourne and Warrnambool, WCR Directors report 'a breakeven operation now starting to show serious signs of progressing financially'. Over the period 1.4 million passengers have been carried.

The situation of the only privately owned Victorian intrastate railway company is worthy of observation at this critical stage of change in the State's public transport.

The 1997-98 financial year saw a further increase in patronage to 309,181 with an increase in revenue. Base train consists are now a power van and a four car consist (one first class, and 180 economy seats — three cars). For certain services this is increased to five or six economy cars.

While initially the company's mission statement was 'to run the Warrnambool to Melbourne rail service', it has now been broadened 'to run a transport business'. The result of identification of the Company's market place and the development of a marketing strategy to encourage longer distance travellers through tourism is evident in the 1998 operation of Monday to Friday day tours to view whales at Logan's Beach, sights around Warrnambool, Tower Hill and the Maritime Museum. At other times, Port Fairy is the area visited. Additional cars are added to the core train consist on the morning down and evening up services. A tour guide

travels with the day trippers from Melbourne, and lunch, afternoon tea and a roast dinner are provided. Additional tours are in the planning stage.

Interest in the tours is such that a two operator teleservice has had to be set up at Geelong to handle up to 150 enquires and bookings daily.

The Minister for Transport has recently approved the introduction of an additional weekly service on the route. The new (37th) service will be the 17 05 Warrnambool to Melbourne on Saturday evenings anticipated to commence in October.

Ministerial approval has also been received for steam operation at 115 km/h on this service between Melbourne and Geelong, then 100 km/h between Geelong and Warrnambool. The speed will increase to 115 km/hr between Geelong and Warrnambool once track welding has been completed. This is due to start in the second half of this year.

While steam will soon return on a regular basis running a core service as well as providing a tourist drawcard, this will not necessarily be from the start of the new Saturday return service. This service will also see the introduction of the company's own drivers, who are also trained and accredited for steam.

WCR now has 17 airconditioned cars available for service. With the increase in services and tourism, two PCP power-vans will be supplemented by an ex *Overland* PCO powervan purchased some time ago from Australian National. It is being refitted and should be in use by Christmas.

On-train catering will be promoted as part of the special event and tourism programs. Currently being internally refitted, the 12 table, 48 seat *Southern Aurora* dining car RMS2360, owned for four years, will be introduced later this year.

WCR Directors observe that to make real progress as a company, they have to offer attractive multi-faceted opportunities for the public to use their services — not just run a rail service from Melbourne to Warrnambool. If considered as a suitable operator of V/Line Passenger, these innovative ideas could be further extended.



WEST COAST ACTION

Above: S302 passes through Seddon with the 12 35 down Warrnambool on Wed.7.5.97

Below: B76-B61 descend the grade from Tottenham on the freight line due to trackwork at Newport on Sat.22.3.97 Both photos Graham Withers





CLP8-CLP14-GM42 depart Tatyoon with 9756 up Patricks container train on Fri.17.7.98

24 HOURS OUT WEST

These engines have eliminated the days of Cs, BLs, 700s, S, and X class making regular journeys to and from Adelaide, which made photography and train watching then so enjoyable. Today, the BLs now work as trailing units only between Melbourne and Adelaide or Sydney, plus a couple allocated to the Victorian broad gauge Long Island steel services. The C classes are presently either stored or used as shunters, while the 700s, remaining S and X class locos have been relegated to other duties by their respective owners.

The three interstate services that attract any attention are the SCT, Tolls and Patricks freight services, that operate on various days during the week, some all on the same day. Out of the three services, SCT and Toll freights are worked by G classes in each direction, with the Patricks utilising CLP/CLF/GM/ALF/700 units. Out of these, the normal are CLP/CLF with the remaining three classes a rarity. With this in mind, I decided to use my last day of annual leave, Friday 17 July, and head out west in search of the up Patricks train, due through Berrybank at 10 23.

On this particular day, the sun was out early with hardly any clouds in the sky. I followed the line from Gheringhap at 09 15, all the way to Berrybank where arrival was an hour later at 10 15, and so far there had been no sign of any train

The days of interstate freight trains between Melbourne and Adelaide with interesting engine combinations are now a rarity, thanks to the introduction of National Rail's gentle giants, the NR class

Julian Insall

All photos by the Author

movements, with the exception of a stabled ballast train at Inverleigh. I waited at Berrybank for two hours until 12 30, and not realising it was due, YN2/9821 down steel with NR96 and BL35 passed through heading towards Ararat. Knowing that the next section location is Vite Vite and there are some great photographic locations to that location, I decided to follow this train to there, in the hope that Patricks would be running late and not cancelled, and may cross YN2 there.

At Vite Vite loop, the train slowed departing the loop due to some track-

work. While waiting for it at the Mount Emu Creek bridge, a fellow railfan who was also out taking photos for the day, advised me that the Patricks superfreighter was running very late, and was predicted to be in Ararat around 15 00 — 7 hours late, and not due into Melbourne until 21 00! Bearing that in mind, I decided to follow NP2 until I came across the Patricks train. At Tatyoon, a very late running PB3/9724 up steel train, headed by NR90-NR92 and DL49 arrived in the loop to cross NP2 at 13 51. All three engines were number one end leading and in the National Rail orange and grey livery.

After crossing NP2, PB3 departed Tatyoon loop towards Melbourne at 13 59. I continued following NP2, although the triple-headed PB3 did look appealing. NP2 passed through Maroona at 14 18 with no intentions of any cross. However, at



'Three way cross at Pyrenees loop'. NR96-BL35 on 9821 down steel eases through No.2 road while CLP8-CLP14-GM42 on 9756 up Patricks waits to follow NR93 on 9724 up steel. Fri.17.7.98

Pyrenees loop, NR93 waited on YN2/9724 up steel on the main line, and crawling up to the end of the steel train was CLP8-CLP14 and GM42 with the up Patricks train, which consisted of 45 fully loaded container wagons. The leading CLP was approximately one metre from the coupler of the last steel wagon! It was not long after watching this that NR96 and BL35 sneaked past with NP2 at 14 50, and on the straight towards Adelaide. YN2 with NR93 departed at 14 52, while the Patricks train remained in the loop until the line was clear to depart at 15 25 to Maroona, and even tually Melbourne. I followed this train until approximately ten kilometres past Tatyoon, where the road leaves the rail line. The chant of GM42 was very distinctive, well over both CLPs that were also powering.

I returned to Ararat, where the evening was spent seeing the passing parade of down and up traffic. The first down movement occurred at 17 30, which was a G class on a loaded grain off the Avoca line from Dunolly. Next was G533 on 9783 grain from Portland, which shunted Freightgate wagons off its train from Portland at 19 20 and departed at 19 35 for Murtoa. This train crossed 9784 up grain, hauled by G535 and X38, passing Ararat at 20 00 towards Portland.

I adjoured to the nearby food and drink establishments in the main street for dinner and failed to observe the up SCT train, or down Tolls train, the latter was not due until 22 42, but passed through early around 22 15.

The next train was the down SCT, headed towards Adelaide, and Perth hauled by G542 and G518, passing by at 23 00. All trains from the next one onwards, were either National Rail services, or the up or down *Overland*, which were all headed by NR locos, with the exception of one down train, MP9/9711 which passed at 01 45, which had a BL class as the third unit.

The next morning arrived with again brilliant sunshine, and I awoke to the sound of the down Patricks train, now headed back towards Adelaide, passing on the down at 07 30. The only traffic expected for the rest of the day were the up and down steel trains, and no non NRC trains due until the evening. With the down steel train in mind, I headed down to Derrinallum and waited for NP2/9821 down steel train, which passed at 12 35, with NR90 and DL49, hauling a short train. I followed this to Vite Vite loop before returning to Melbourne and ending a very enjoyable 24 hours out west!

NR80-NR36 prepare to stop at Dimboola for a crew change on 9824 up steel on Sat.14.3.98





CLASSIC WORKING SOUTH-V

...

Above: CLP12-CLP17
hurry towards
Berrybank with 9756 up
Patricks on Mon.9.2.98

Below: CLF7-GM38-
CLP8 approach Tatyoon
with 9756 up Patricks
on Mon.2.3.98. Concrete
sleepers as seen in the
foreground will soon
replace the remaining
wooden sleepers in this
section.



OCO IN THE EST

...

Above: B61 approaches South Geelong with the down Warrnambool pass. on Sat.2.11.96

Below: CLP12-CLP17 cross the Mount Emu Creek bridge on 9756 on Fri.13.2.98

All photos Graham Withers



OPERATIONS

An overview of recent sightings and observations

NORTH — Shepparton - Bendigo - Echuca

BENDIGO: Sightings are set out below.

Wed.1.7:

G521-X41-24 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 37.

G516-T396-24 wagons (9280) departing at 20 07.

G521-X31-27 wagons (9084) departing at 21 55.

Thurs.2.7:

G527-X40-19 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 39.

G525-18 wagons (9280) departing at 20 05.

G527-X41-32 wagons (9084) departing at 22 15.

Fri.3.7:

G527-X36-T396-26 wagons (9083) arriving at 21 14.

G516-14 wagons (9280) departing at 19 50.

G527-X40-T396-34 wagons (9084) departing at 22 04.

Mon.6.7:

G526-X41-39 wagons (9083) arriving at 17 00.

G525-T379-20 wagons (9280) departing at 20 09.

G526-X36-17 wagons (9084) departing at 22 14.

Tues.7.7:

G511-X40-26 wagons (9083) arriving at 17 48.

G516-27 wagons (9280) departing at 20 14.

Wed.8.7:

G521-X42-28 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 44.

G527-25 wagons (9280) departing at 20 00.

G521-X40-29 wagons (9084) departing at 21 50.

Thurs.9.7:

G521-X31-22 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 38.

G516-18 wagons (9280) departing at 20 11.

G521-X42-38 wagons (9084) departing at 21 53.

Fri.10.7:

G521-X44-27 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 45.

Sun.12.7:

G527-X45-17 wagons (9280) departing at 19 52.

G521-X31-29 wagons (9084) departing at 22 00.

7017 (8087) arriving at 22 08.

7017-7019 (8088) departing at 23 25.

Mon.13.7:

G521-X42-39 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 56.

G512-6 wagons (9280) departing at 19 58.

Tues.14.7:

G521-X39-38 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 48.

G527-X45-24 wagons (9280) departing at 19 56.

G521-X42-35 wagons (9084) departing at 21 34.

Wed.15.7:

T379-6 x Hitachi cars (9011) arriving at 08 12.

T379-3 x Hitachi cars (9012) departing at 09 46.

G525-X36-26 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 47.

G523-13 wagons (9280) departing at 20 13.

G525-X39-24 wagons (9084) departing at 21 48.

Thurs.16.7:

G525-X39-37 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 48.

G527-T390-24 wagons (9280) departing at 20 15.

Fri.17.7:

G521-X44-T396-27 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 45.

Sun.19.7:

G523-T409-18 wagons (9280) departing at 19 54.

G521-X39-37 wagons (9084) departing at 21 31.

Mon.20.7:

G521-X39-27 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 34.

G525-12 wagons (9280) departing at 20 06.

G521-X44-T396-29 wagons (9084) departing at 21 35.

Tues.21.7:

G521-X44-48 wagons (9083) arriving at 17 06.

G521-X44-56 wagons (9083) departing at 17 30.

G523-8 wagons (9280) departing at 20 09.

Wed.22.7:

G521-X33-X39-45 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 49.

G515-25 wagons (9280) departing at 19 57.

G521-X39-X44-37 wagons (9084) departing at 22 55.

Thurs.23.7:

G521-X34-X44-T374-27 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 34.

G527-A78-T388-41 wagons (9280) departing at 20 07.

Fri.24.7:

G521-X31-X41-T396-27 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 40.

Sun.26.7:

N451-Club Victoria-Murray-FN17 (8013) arriving at 11 50.

N451-FN17-Murray-Club Victoria (8030) departing at 12 50.

G524-X42-38 wagons (9280) departing at 20 11.

G521-X34-X31-46 wagons (9084) departing at 22 10.

Mon.27.7:

G521-X42-40 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 52.

G526-13 wagons (9280) departing at 20 00.

Tues.28.7:

N463-N455-SH34-FN10 (8028) departing at 11 20.

7010 (8088) departing at 12 00.

7010 (8087) arriving at 12 57.

7010 (8088) departing at 14 00.

G521-X34-28 wagons (9083) arriving at 16 52.

G523-T374-26 wagons (9280) departing at 20 10

BENDIGO DEPOT VISITS:

Sun.5.7: G516, G525, N461, N465, T379, T382, T402 and Y171.

Sun.12.7: G512, G527, N461, N473, T382, T402, X45 and Y171.

Sun.19.7: G523, G525, N467, N475, T382, T402, T409 and Y171.

Sun.26.7: G524, G526, N451, N461, T374, T382, T402, X42 and Y171.

LOCOS AT SHEPPARTON:

Sat.20.6: P22, A79, X47 and N457.

Sat.27.6: X52, A79 and P23.

Sun.5.7: X52, A79 and P22.

Sun.12.7: X52, X53, P19 and N472.

Sat.18.7: X54, X53 and P20. (CC)

OPERATIONS



DRC43 on an ARE tour to Cobram and Dookie on the down at Strathmerton on Sat.11.7.98 *Peter Weickhardt*

NORTH EAST — Seymour - Tocumwal - Albury

SPECIAL TRAINS: Over the weekend of Sat.11.7 and Sun.12.7 special trains operated over both the North East and Goulburn Valley lines. On Sat.11.7, DRC43 and 1BS ran to Cobram and Dookie.

Later the same day T356 ran a Steamrail snow trip to Wangaratta, returning the next day. (PF)

: **STANDARD GAUGE:** The NR class locos dominate practically all standard gauge operations now, with the occasional 81 class trailing. However, there have been multiple NRs observed, notably on Wed.8.7 when five NRs headed the 9623 down steel train. (PF)

: **WEST — North Geelong - Ballarat - Maryborough - Cressy - Ararat**

: **GHERINGHAP:** Some interesting sightings include:

: **Sun.21.6:**
NR82-BL29-49 wagons (9712) on up at 00 46.
NR97-NR77-NR54-54 wagons (9827) on down at 20 18.

: **Mon.22.6:**
NR78-NR27-BL35-55 wagons (9822) on up at 10 21.

Class leader NR1 with BL27 wait in Seymour loop with 9825 goods on Wed.13.5.98 as the down XTP heads for Sydney.
BLs are infrequent visitors in the north-east *Peter Foote*



OPERATIONS



NR87-BL32-NR34-NR75 power 9822 goods across the plains between Westmere and Nerrim Nerrim on Fri.13.2.98 *Graham Withers*

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| NR92-NR84-DL40-38 wagons (9821)
on down at 11 16. | NR77-NR80-BL29-71 wagons (9701)
on down at 20 38. | G523-X33-G512-S302 (WCR)
19 wagons (9137) on down at
14 37. |
| G536-G541-G535-49 wagons (9752)
on up at 14 13. | Sat.27.6:
CLP12-CLP8-30 wagons (inc. ASR
crew car) (9755) on down at 02 03. | Fri.3.7:
NR86-20 wagons (9823) on down at
02 28. |
| NR82-BL29-BL34-38 wagons (9711)
on down at 22 26. | NR82-NR106-68 wagons (9826) on
up at 08 44. | CLP8-CLF2-26 wagons (inc. ASR
crew car) (9756) on up at 11 38. |
| CLP17-CLP8-43 wagons (inc. SCT
loading) (9755) on down at 22 46. | Sun.28.6:
NR81-G517-66 wagons (9702) on
up at 07 51. | Sat.4.7:
CLF2-CLP8-24 wagons (inc. ASR
crew car) (9755) on down at 02 16. |
| Tues.23.6:
CLP14-CLF1-64 wagons (ran instead
of Mon.) (9754) on up at 05 53. | Mon.29.6:
NR77-NR80-40 wagons (9821) on
down at 11 51. | G535-G530 (9754) on up at 06 30. |
| NR81-G517-30 wagons (9821) on
down at 12 23. | CLP12-CLP8-27 wagons (9756) on
up at 11 53. | NR87-NR23-NR28-74 wagons (9826)
on up at 09 05. |
| G533-G541-G542-42 wagons (9751)
on down at 21 46. | G528-12 wagons (9792) on up at
22 06. | Sun.5.7:
NR80-29 wagons (9724) on up at
15 57. |
| Wed.24.6:
CLP12-CLP13-G528-34 wagons
(9755) on down at 21 26. | CLP8-CLP12-30 wagons (9755) on
down at 23 18. | Mon.6.7:
G531-G528-G518-62 wagons (9754)
on up at 07 31. |
| NR-NR-BL26-38 wagons (BL26 back
on standard gauge) (9711) on
down at 22 41. | Tues.30.6:
G524-G512-X33-27 wagons (9137)
on down at 15 11. | CLP12-CLF2-35 wagons (9756) on
up at 12 27. |
| Thurs.25.6:
NR81-G517-AN1-49 wagons (9712)
on up at 03 47. | G533-G540-G528-41 wagons (9751)
on down at 21 04. | CLF2-CLP12-34 wagons (9755) on
down at 23 08. |
| G511-10 wagons (9137) on down
at 14 09. | G-18 wagons (inc. 2 WCR <i>Overland</i>
cars) (9792) on up at 23 09. | Tues.7.7:
S300 (WCR) 6 vehicles (8191) on
down at 13 26. |
| Fri.26.6:
G-G-33 wagons (inc. 9 SCT vans)
(9791) on down at 00 31. | Wed.1.7:
G511-15 wagons (9137) on down
at 14 41. | NR81-21 wagons (9724) on up at
14 48. |
| CLP8-CLP12-30 wagons (inc. ASR
crew car) (9756) on up at 11 43. | G-20 wagons (9752) on up at 21 25
(extra SCT). | G513-18 wagons (9137) on down
at 15 04. |
| G513-X41-S311 (WCR)-10 wagons
(9137) on down at 14 11. | Thurs.2.7:
NR80-3 wagons (9823) on down at
04 01. | G515-X46-28 wagons (9123) on
down at 16 00. |

OPERATIONS

G531-G532-G529-62 wagons (9753)
on down at 19 17.

G530-G518-G539-42 wagons (9751)
on down at 21 32.

Wed.8.7:

NR92-NR90-DL41-63 wagons (9702)
on up at 08 19.

X33-X41-32 wagons (9137) on down
at 14 40.

G528-10 wagons (9708) on up at
14 59.

G512-34 wagons (9123) on down
at 16 14.

NR80-14 wagons (9724) on up at
16 26.

G528-10 wagons (9705) on down
at 18 17.

Thurs.9.7:

H3-10 wagons (9791) on down
at 00 09.

NR86-BL29-36 wagons (9821) on
down at 11 31.

G533-G540-G518-47 wagons (9752)
on up at 14 01.

G528-10 wagons (9706) on up at
14 39 (Inverleigh-Manor ballast).

G526-X46-G513-31 wagons (9137)
on down at 14 48.

G528-10 wagons (9705) on down
at 17 32 (Manor-Inverleigh ballast).

NR81-26 wagons (9724) on up at
17 35.

G537-H3-13 wagons (9792) on up
at 23 14.

Fri.10.7:

G514-7 wagons (9137) on down at
13 56.

G528-10 wagons (9706) on up at
15 48 (Inverleigh-Manor ballast).

G528-10 wagons (9705) on down.
at 18 15 (Manor-Inverleigh ballast).

Sat.11.7:

NR79-NR104-BL29-66 wagons (9826)
on up at 09 42.

NR96-BL35-53 wagons (inc. TNT
5-pack wagon) (9729) on down at
15 55.

Sun.12.7:

NR76-BL33-49 wagons (inc. TNT
5-pack wagon) (9827) on down
at 17 41.

Mon.13.7:

CLP17-CLP12-25 wagons (9756) on
up at 09 34.

NR89-DL41-BL29-40 wagons (9821)
on down at 11 13.

NR81-NR78-G517-56 wagons (9822)
on up at 11 15.

G541-G534-G518-H3 (Westrail)
40 wagons (9752) on up at 14 09.

G513-T400-24 wagons (9123) on
down at 16 58.

Tues.14.7:

NR97-NR59-60+ wagons (inc.
2 TNT 5-pack wagons) (9702) on
up at 08 19.

G533-24 wagons (9774) on up at
09 54.

NR87-NR93-NR113-35 wagons
(9822) on up at 13 51.

G541-10 wagons (9706) on up at
14 49 (Inverleigh-Manor ballast).

G541-10 wagons (9705) on down
at 17 58 (Manor-Inverleigh ballast).

NR97-NR87-60 wagons (inc. TNT
5-pack wagons) (9701) on down
at 20 42.

G540-G518-G528-43 wagons (9751)
on down at 21 55.

Wed.15.7:

NR89-DL50-53 wagons (9712) on up
at 05 18.

G513-T400-25 wagons (9124) on up
at 07 51.

G541-10 wagons (9706) on up at
08 05 (Inverleigh-Gheringhap
ballast).

G542-CLP17-G537 (2 days late)
59 wagons (9754) on up at 10 33.

G541-10 wagons (9705) on down at
10 54 (Gheringhap-Inverleigh
ballast).

G538-CLP8-GM42-29 wagons (9756)
on up at 11 51.

NR85-DL47-BL29-45 wagons (9822)
on up at 14 01.

G526-X33-T400-30 wagons (9137) on
down at 14 49.

NR80-19 wagons (9724) on up at
16 35.

G540-G538 (1 day late)-55 wagons
(9753) on down at 22 26.

CLP17-GM42-CLP8-29 wagons
(9755) on down at 22 49.

Thurs.16.7:

G541-10 wagons (9706) on up at
07 17 (Inverleigh-Tottenham Loop
ballast).

NR88-BL29-DL47-33 wagons (9821)
on down at 11 21.

G528-G518-52 wagons (inc. 4
painted SCT vans) (9752) on up
at 11 24.

G541-10 wagons (9705) on down
at 12 43 (Tottenham Loop-
Inverleigh ballast).

G511-A78-X42-23 wagons (A78
painted in V/Line Freight livery
(9121) on down at 13 01.

NR96-BL35-G517-47 wagons (9822)
on up at 13 56.

G514-X31-T392-34 wagons (9137)
on down at 14 43.

Fri.17.7:

G527-28 wagons (9125) on down
at 01 53.

G513-X45-28 wagons (9124) on up
at 04 10.

NR89-NR118-71 wagons (inc. 2 TNT
5-pack wagons) (9702) on up at
08 27.

NR96-BL35-42 wagons (9821) on
down at 11 34.

G526-X45-X33-38 wagons (9137) on
down at 14 40.

NR92-NR90-DL49-60 wagons (9822)
on up at 16 37.

CLP8-CLP17-GM42-44 wagons
(9756) on up at 18 43.

Sat.18.7:

NR77-28 wagons (9715) on down
at 01 45.

NR87-DL49-34 wagons (9821) on
down at 11 15.

CLP17-CLP8-GM42-44 wagons
(9755) on down at 18 14.

Sun.19.7:

NR88-G522-45 wagons (9821) on
down at 11 06.

NR85-15 wagons (9827) on down
at 17 28.

Mon.20.7:

GM42-CLP8-CLP17-40 wagons
(9756) on up at 08 12.

G512-X37-28 wagons (9124) on up
at 08 30.

T388-Hitachi x 3 (9113) on down
at 09 10.

NR81-NR78-BL33-38 wagons (9821)
on down at 11 34.

NR77-NR100-NR54-L262(Westrail)-
Q319(Westrail)-57 wagons (9822)
on up at 11 37.

G527-X37-30 wagons (9137) on
down at 15 03.

G528-G542-G518-46 wagons (9752)
on up at 15 27.

NR87-41 wagons (9724) on up at
16 55.

G527-A78-30 wagons (9123) on
down at 17 30.

CLP17-CLP8-GM42-45 wagons
(9755) on down at 22 30.

Tues.21.7:

NR-NR11-8118-66 wagons (9702)
on up at 08 33.

NR94-NR88-G522-GM1-35 wagons
(9822) on up at 11 02.

G516-X45-T400-50 wagons (9137)
on down at 14 27.



X31 at Fulham with a grain train from Tempy for drought/flood affected farmers in East Gippsland. Thurs.2.7.98
Darren Hodges

DROUGHT/ FLOOD RELIEF TRAIN AT SALE

RTL1 shunting at the Sale Freightgate to place the wagons in position for discharge
Peter Weickhardt



The much needed grain being unloaded. When the loading was first arranged the area was in drought, soon after very heavy rain hit the district washing out a number of farms
Darren Hodges

EASTERN DISTRICT WORKINGS



- Above: Near Clayton, T396 hauls a 'City Rail' car (Sydney) from AD Tranz at Dandenong.
- Thurs.16.7.98 *Michael Bray*
- Below: With dynamic brake whining, A81 crosses Monash Way at Morwell and prepares to stop
- before entering the Maryvale siding with the APM train on Tues.25.11.97 *Darren Hodges*



ROLLINGSTOCK

A Monthly update of Locomotive and Rollingstock news

LOCOMOTIVES

BL LOCOS ON LONG ISLAND FREIGHTS: BL class locos now regularly appear on NR Long Island steel services still painted in the green and gold AN colours. It is rumoured that they will soon be in NR's Steel Link colours. (PJ)

STEAM ON GEELONG TRAINS: V/Line Passenger once again ran R class steam locos on the regular 09 55 down and 13 20 up Geelong passenger trains during the second week of the July school holidays (from Mon.6.7 to Fri. 10.7). The train consisted of a double four car H set and power van and seat reservation was compulsory.

Steam has been used during the July school holidays on these trains since 1994, although the service was disrupted during 1997 on account of industrial action. Patronage from casual observation did not appear to be as high this year as in 1996. (CB)

XPT

SHORT SETS: For most of May, the day and overnight Melbourne - Sydney XPT sets ran with only six carriages rather than the usual seven. Apparently all XPT sets on the east coast (Melbourne - Sydney - Brisbane) ran with shorter consists during the month for two reasons:

- To pass released carriages through an accelerated heavy internal cleaning program.
- To catch up on outstanding minor maintenance issues.

The final short Melbourne - Sydney XPT departed Spencer Street on the morning of Mon.1.6 and consisted of

XP2017-XFH2106 (Car G)-

XB2202 (Car E)-

XF2211 (Car D)-

XBR2156 (Car C)-

XL2228 (Car B)-

XAM2175 (Car A)-XP2008. (CB)

CARRIAGES

EIGHTH BZN OUTSHOPPED: BZN 266 was outshopped from Newport Workshops on Wed.24.7 after having been converted from a BZ class car. It was transferred to the Carriage Maintenance Depot at Dudley Street after leaving Newport for final adjustments. This work was completed on Thurs.2.7 and the car made its first run in revenue traffic on the 17 40 down

Geelong on Fri.3.7 as Car D in six car set N17 (this set consisted on ACN51-BRN49-BN4-BZN266-BS218-BZ268).

This car differs from previous BZN conversions in the following areas:

- A vacuum retention toilet is installed — the first ever in a V/Line Passenger carriage.
- External entrance doors at the eastern end are slightly wider than normal to make it easier for wheelchair bound passengers to use the carriage (this meets the latest Commonwealth legislation for people with disabilities).

A vacuum toilet was used for two reasons:

- The toilet unit needed to be re-positioned to give sufficient clearance between the walls and the toilet to meet the dimensions specified in the latest Commonwealth legislation for people with disabilities. The fittings under a normal retention toilet would not have cleared the bogies and other fixtures under the car in the new position, whereas the vacuum toilet could be adapted.
- Vacuum toilets generate little to no odour and present a better image than the retention toilets employed on other cars. (CB)

BS218 OUTSHOPPED: This car was outshopped from Newport Workshops after a major overhaul on Wed.24.6. It was repainted in the red and blue colour scheme from orange and grey whilst at Newport, and is the first BS class car to wear these colours.

Its first revenue run after overhaul was as car D on the 18 15 down Shepparton on Fri.26.6. This train was hauled by an N class and consisted of D van, BS, and 3N. (CB)

AVOCA WITHDRAWN: Dining car *Avoca* has been regularly running to Geelong and back on Friday evenings attached to normal services (19 15 down and 21 05 up) for some time to enable Supertrain Promotions to provide a unique dining experience to the general public (See p.283 September 1997 issue).

On Mon.15.6, *Avoca* was shopped for repairs at the Carriage Maintenance Depot (located at Dudley Street) after making a revenue run to Geelong and back on Fri.12.6. A detailed investi-

gation revealed that the car was no longer serviceable given the condition of the axle bearings, bogie frames and wheels and was subsequently withdrawn from regular service. It was stored beside the CMD building on a spare pair of Harris bogies.

Former *Spirit of Progress* dining car *Murray* was shopped at CMD for minor interior alterations to make it a suitable replacement for *Avoca* that included:

- Removing the bar that incorporated a sink and refrigerator located at the kitchen end of the main saloon.
- Transferring the chairs, tables and red velvet curtains from *Avoca* to *Murray*.
- Installing the CD player and speakers in *Murray* originally fitted to *Avoca*.

The car was outshopped on Fri.10.7 and made its first run to Geelong in revenue service that night.

Between Fri.12.6 and Fri.10.7, *Norman* and *Murray* were used together as a replacement for *Avoca* prior to *Murray* being shopped at CMD. (CB)

PCO POWER VAN REPAINTED: *Overland* power van PCO4 was externally repainted silver during June. This van was previously painted in the blue and yellow colour scheme carried by the Australian National *Explorer* train. (CB)

CURRENT LOCATION OF BG1: E type carriage BG1 was transferred from Ballarat to Seymour in early 1998 for storage within the Seymour Rail Heritage Centre area. This wooden bodied carriage was being used as the ASW test car prior to being stored. (CB)

SPRINTERS

D EXAMINATION: Sprinter 7004 (still painted in its teal and yellow colour scheme) was undergoing its D exam (performed every 500,000 kilometres) at the Carriage Maintenance Depot (CMD) in July. This is the fifth Sprinter to receive a D exam at CMD. (CB)

TANGARA

The Tangara set was seen several times at the Bayswater Maintenance Facility during the last week of July. (BL)



G CLASS IN ADELAIDE

• Above: G529-8118 share stalls at the Dry Creek motive power centre on Wed.8.7.98

• Below: G530-G529-G518 arrive at Dry Creek with the SCT train from Melbourne on Wed.8.7.98 *Both photos Julian Insall*



PRESERVATION

News from the preservation scene

KANGAROO FLAT STATION RESTORATION

External restoration of Kangaroo Flat station using Heritage Victoria funding was completed at the end of June. This station was in quite poor condition before work started and the end result is quite impressive.

Major tasks completed were:

- The slate roof on the main brick station building was repaired using second hand slates in good condition.
- All downpipes and guttering were repaired.
- The platform verandah was repaired and all woodwork in poor condition on the main building was replaced.
- The timber passenger waiting shelter on the up platform was repaired.
- The station buildings on both platforms were repainted. (CB)

WARBURTON RAIL TRAIL

Work is in hand to complete the Lilydale to Warburton rail trail for the opening on Sun.8.11. The Victorian Government and the Rail Trail Committee have worked to convert the

former rail line formation to provide a continuous rail trail.

The Lilydale to Warburton rail trail starts at the Maroondah Highway at Lilydale and will provide for 38 kilometres of trail through to Warburton.

The trail climbs uphill to Mount Evelyn from suburbia into bushland. It passes through tall timber areas, then downhill into open grazing country and finally following the Yarra River into Warburton.

PUFFING BILLY RAILWAY

Some interesting statistics for the Puffing Billy Railway's 1997-98 period.

- Steam locomotives operated 37,220 km and diesel locomotives 2887 km, with 337,094 carriage km.
- The highest kilometres operated by specific rollingstock included 12A (steam) 12,294 km over 275 days, 5 NBD (carriage) 19,987 km.
- The average kilometres per NA loco used was 8670 km and car and van used 8643 km, with 39 cars and vans and 16 wagons used.
- The on-time running (OT-5 minutes) was 62.4%.

- During June the first visit of NAL carriages (Nos. 1 and 2) to Gembrook took place for the Federal Minister of Tourism and party to ride back to Emerald. The first PBR NA locomotive (8A) operated to Cockatoo from Lakeside to take over a special on the up from DH59.
- 7A and DH59 (push-pull) on special train to Fielder for photographic purposes as well as the first NA to Fielder bridge.

In May the Gembrook works train included two Walhalla Goldfields Railway 4-wheeled ballast hoppers WGR105 and WGR106 on loan to assist with the extensive ballasting required on the Gembrook section.

'Shakedown specials' for society members are being run in advance of the Gembrook re-opening. These trains provide invaluable training for the train crews to gain experience in the characteristics of the new line section. It allows drivers to 'learn the road', firemen to test the fire, water and steam pressure, guards and signalmen to learn the train operation, signalling and safeworking, with conductors to become familiar with the line to

DH59 crosses the trestle bridge at Belgrave on Sun.22.3.98 on a day of total fire ban *Michael Bray*



PRESERVATION



Loco 961 and the Explorer Train including the four K cars now owned by Steamrail Victoria at Nuriootpa bound for Angaston on Sun.18.4.93 *Bob Sampson*

answer the range of questions from the public.

The 'shakedown specials' are planned for September 12, 13; October 1, 2, 3, 4, 6; leaving Belgrave 09 50 to arrive Gembrook at 11 40 and with the return departing 15 20 to arrive Belgrave at 17 30.

No.2 GOODS SHED

A Government appointed planning panel responsible for the evaluation of No.2 Goods Shed on Flinders Street extension in the Docklands area has recommended that the Melbourne Planning Scheme not be altered to allow a 560 metre high tower proposed by the Grollo Group to be built on the site.

The proposed tower would entail the demolition of most of the No.2 Goods Shed and the removal of the Exhibition Goods Shed, built for the 1880 Great Exhibition and moved to the present site in 1881.

The site is occupied by five rail sheds. The 385 metre No.2 shed, the longest such shed in Victoria, is situated across the middle of the site where the \$1.5 billion Grollo tower is proposed to be built.

The report points out that the Docklands Authority's urban design

guidelines for the Batman Hill site specify that the old buildings be kept and that innovative uses be found for them.

The report concluded by stating that Grollo had failed to justify a departure from the existing planning controls in its proposal to demolish most of No.2 Goods Shed to build the tower and that it would involve a too great a heritage loss.

STEAMRAIL VICTORIA

Following the disposal of the air-conditioned NSW cars a syndicate of Steamrail members and volunteers were successful in their bid for the option to purchase six steel, non-air-conditioned cars from Great Southern Railway Ltd (GSR) for eventual purchase by Steamrail.

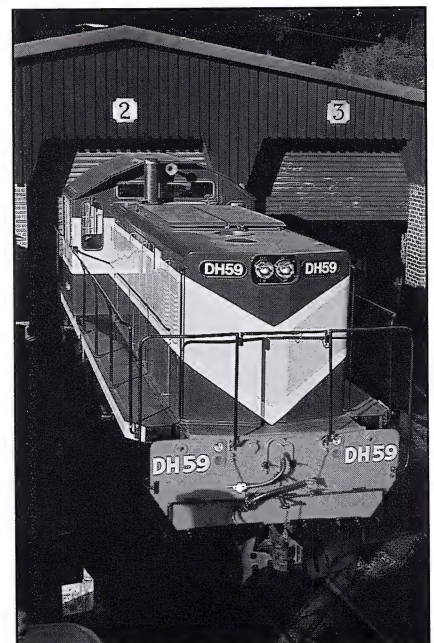
The cost is \$50,000 for the six cars, including spare standard and broad gauge bogies. The cars are the four refurbished K cars and two non-restored cars.

The cars are the former SAR K cars that operated in Victoria for a period of ten years until 1993. Following their return to South Australia, the four cars were fully refurbished by AN for the Explorer Train in late 1993 for tours into the Barossa Valley. They were

subsequently sold with passenger services to GSR and put up for sale, as they were not part of GSR's plans.

These cars, in conjunction with the Steamrail S cars, will provide high speed and gauge conversion operation to meet future market requirements.

DH59 rests in the sunshine outside the Belgrave workshops *Michael Bray*



WORKS

A round-up of News, Tenders and items from the Weekly Operational Notices

GEELONG STATION ALTERATIONS

The task of converting the interstate booking office at Geelong station to a combined customer information counter and luggage/cloak office was completed at the end of June.

This new facility avoids the need for passengers to walk down the platform from the main waiting area to a separate office for luggage and cloaking requirements.

The original luggage/cloak office has been modified to accommodate staff. (CB)

PLATFORM RE-SURFACING

Work started in mid-May on re-sealing the bitumen surface on the platforms along the North Eastern line.

The first station to be completed was Donnybrook and by the beginning of July the contractor was at Tallarook after having completed Wallan, Heathcote Junction, Wandong, Kilmore East and Broadford. (CB)

RE-PAINTING TALLAROOK

The task of re-painting Tallarook station was in progress at the beginning of July. Once complete, all stations between Craigieburn and Wodonga will have been repainted within the last three years. (CB)

TENDERS

- Tender Y98/010, closed 2 September 1998
Yarra Trams (trading as Met Tram 2) for the design and construction of tram infrastructure at various locations.
- Tender H98105, closed 25 August
Hillside Trains for the supply and delivery of one double track 90 degree railway/tramway crossing.
- Tender VT0010D, closed 26 August
Victorian Rail Track for the supply and delivery of approximately 90,000 cubic metres of ballast. The material is required for the Pura Pura to Maroona concrete re-sleeper project and may be required to be delivered onto road or rail vehicles and/or be stocked piled.

- Contract 99007, closed 25 August
Delatite Shire for the design, fabrication and erection of approximately 800 linear metres of pedestrian fencing on the former railway bridge, at Bonnie Doon.
- Expression of Interest, closed 19 August
V/Line Freight Corporation invites expressions of interest for the provision of services to 'Fast Track' covering freight delivery and pick-up service – Wodonga/Albury, freight delivery and pick-up service – Southern NSW/Riverina.
- Expression of Interest, closed 5 August
John A Bell, auctioneers and valuers, on behalf of Hamersley Iron Pty Ltd for the sale of surplus locomotives situated at Dampier, Western Australia, Hamersley Iron 7 Mile rail complex.
 - 3 x GE model C36-7 diesel electric locomotives
 - 3 x GM model SD50 diesel electric locomotives
 - Comprehensive spares parts inventory.

G528 arrives at Gheringhap with a ballast from Inverleigh on Thurs.9.7.98 *Julian Insall*



TAILDISC

Reviews, amendments, queries, correspondence and bits and pieces



X45-G526 arrive at Underbool on Mon.20.7.98. Third series X class are infrequent visitors on the Ouyen - Pinnaroo branch line *Michael B Walsh*

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Mr Mark Russell of Wodonga writes:

Further to my article on the transfer of MRPS rollingstock, a couple of errors crept in and recent news might be of interest.

ATC (as in ATC1) stands for Aréscio Trak Chief (note there is no 'c' in 'Trak').

A photo of sister unit ATC2 appeared in NEWSRAIL on page 105 April 1995 issue.

The local driver mentioned in the first paragraph of the second column was asked if it was possible to stable the MTHs at Stony Point, not Hastings. The location was changed to Hastings due to plans being changed to two trains instead of one and because the second train was planned to originate from Stony Point, setting back after being made up at Crib Point.

The consist for the first transfer train is incorrect from WAL951. The MRPS vehicles (AW65 to CM12) should be reversed. The error was from special train notice S.97/5534 which was incorrect.

The wagons coded in the article as 'T' should read 'OT' (as in oil tank).

Since the move, the MRPS has run passenger trains from Moorooduc several times this year. The line has now been restored between Moorooduc and Tanti Park with line restoration continuing towards Mornington. Trains now run on the first Sunday of every month, hourly from 11 00 to 16 00 from Moorooduc.

ODD SPOT

AT machine message: The ticket vending machine that accepts both notes and coins at Eltham station was out of order on the morning of Thurs.18.6. Station staff had attached the following message to the machine:

Machine Stuffed
Use Coin Only Machine
or
Human at Window

SITUATION VACANT

Sightings Co-ordinator

NEWSRAIL invites applications for the newly created position of Sightings Co-ordinator.

This position will report to the Editor and be responsible for the creation and co-ordination of a network of sightings contributors across the state. The Sightings Co-ordinator will be required to prepare a summary each month for publication in NEWSRAIL.

As the Sightings Co-ordinator will not be required to attend NEWSRAIL editorial meetings on a regular basis applications from country readers are encouraged.

All applications setting out relevant qualifications are to be sent to the Editor.

— The — CLASSIFICATION YARD

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The Ararat Railway Centenary Book (1975), in good condition. Ian Stanley, RMB 348, Beaufort, 3373.

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TRACKS IN THE SUN A QUEENSLAND PERSPECTIVE

Produced and Directed by Mike Condon, Express Train Video

Queensland Rail is probably Australia's most exciting rail network. Nowhere else can such diversity be easily delivered by one rail network. Giant coal trains, at least 1.6 kilometres in length race from mines to port facilities, whilst express freighters link Queensland's major cities. In contrast to these scenes Queensland Rail still supports long distance passenger services and an extensive urban passenger network. However, by far the most remarkable aspect of the network is the retention and expansion of its steam heritage operations.

Tracks in the Sun, a Queensland perspective, is a collection of stories that feature steam, diesel and electric operations. All six steam locomotives from the Steam Heritage Fleet are included in this program. A key feature of this program is a story of A10, No.6, one of the oldest locomotives operating on a mainline network anywhere in the world.

Operations on a **Now Closed** branch line with a diesel locomotive form a now withdrawn class form a stark contrast with the giant electric hauled coal trains of Central Queensland. Almost a distant memory, the Brisbane Valley Branch is featured via one of the last steam tours on the branch during 1989.

Steaming through the suburbs DD17, 1051, at the head of a suburban coach set recreates the atmosphere of Brisbane suburban operations of the 1960s.

There's even a story on the soon to be introduced high speed Tilt Train. The train has been filmed at Walkers Ltd's test centre as well as out on the mainline.

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CHAMPION ROAD, NORTH WILLIAMSTOWN

TRAIN HOBBY PRESENTS

" The Blue "

A LIMITED EDITION 'A2' TRAIN HOBBY PRINT

Reproduced with great care from an original painting by Alec Stevenson,
with the kind permission of Seymour Railway Heritage Centre Incorporated.



Painting by Alec Stevenson.



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"The Blue"
The locomotive was transferred to the south of one of the four "A2" Class Pacific Locomotives
At 7.58 pm each night for 25 years, the town of Seymour was the head of the famed "Spirits of Progress" race, with the
racing towards the town of Albury. The locomotive was the last to be used in the race, crossing the Don Cross way to the driver.
Loading Shunter Don Cross way to the driver.

The view shows S201 "Sir Thomas Mitchell" passing Seymour "B" signal box at the Victoria Street level crossing on a mid summer evening.



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